and working in Palestine. This idea was first clearly expressed by Leo Pinsker, of Odessa, in his book, *Auto-Emancipation,* published in 1882. At that time Palestine had no ports, railways, or roads; the Turkish administration was inefficient and corrupt. The inhabitants, who numbered some 300,000, were on the lowest cultural and economic level; malaria and trachoma were endemic. In 1882 the 34,000 Jewish inhabitants—half of them Ashkenazim and half Sephardim—inhabited the four "holy cities", Jerusalem, Hebron, Safed, and Tiberias, subsisting mainly on charity from Europe; there were no Jewish agricultural settlements and practically no industry.

Undeterred by circumstances, the Russian forerunners of Zionism formed in Odessa, in 1885, the society "Khoveve Zion" (Friends of Zion) for promoting emigration to Palestine. They did not know either the country or its economic possibilities, and the movement was actuated by sentiment rather than by reason. Jewish colonization on a large scale was not as yet possible in Palestine. Although Baron Edmond de Rothschild of Paris took the greatest interest in it and, from 1885 onwards, devoted large sums of money to it, it was only possible for a few hundred Jewish families to settle there every year and start a new economic existence. Palestine could not become a refuge for the

hundreds of thousands, nay, the millions, of Jews anxious to leave Russia. Achad Haam (Usher Ginzberg), who visited Palestine in 1890, reached the conclusion that although it could not receive a great Jewish immigration, it was fit to become the spiritual centre of Jewry, The return of a certain number of Jews to Palestine was to him not an end in itself, but was, by creating a centre of real Jewish life, to be the means for revitalizing world-Jewry. He understood that this was not possible without a considerable Jewish settlement in Palestine, which was to be economically self-sufficient; it was to consist not of traders, dependent on Arab customers, but of Jewish peasants, a future bulwark against assimilation.